

BAPTISM—A BURIAL

NO. 1627

A SERMON
DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, OCTOBER 30, 1881,
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“Know you not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?
Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from
the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”
Romans 6:3, 4.*

I SHALL not enter into controversy over this text, although over it some have raised the question of infant baptism or believers' baptism, immersion or sprinkling. If any persons can give a consistent and instructive interpretation of the text, other than by assuming believers' immersion to be Christian baptism, I should like to see them do it. I myself am quite incapable of performing such a feat, or even of imagining how it can be done! I am content to take the view that baptism signifies the burial of believers in water in the name of the Lord, and I shall so interpret the text. If any disagree, it may at least interest them to know what *we* understand to be the meaning of the baptismal rite—and I trust that they may think none the less of the *spiritual* sense because they differ as to the external sign. After all, the visible emblem is not the most prominent matter in the text. May God the Holy Spirit help us to reach its inner teaching. I do *not* understand Paul to say that if improper persons, such as unbelievers, hypocrites and deceivers are baptized they are baptized into our Lord's death. He says, “so many of *us*,” putting himself with the rest of the children of God. He intends such as are *entitled* to baptism and come to it with their hearts in a right state. Of them he says, “Know you not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?” He does not even *intend* to say that those who were rightly baptized have, all of them, entered into the fullness of its spiritual meaning, for if they had, there would have been no need of the question, “Know you not?”

It would seem that some had been baptized who did not clearly know the meaning of their own baptism. They had faith and a glimmer of knowledge sufficient to make them right recipients of baptism, but they were not well instructed in the teaching of baptism. Perhaps they saw in it only a *washing* and had never discerned the *burial*. I will go further and say that I question if any of us yet know the fullness of the meaning of either of the ordinances which Christ has instituted. As yet we are, with regard to spiritual things, like children playing on the beach while the ocean rolls before us. At best we wade up to our ankles like our little ones on the seashore. A few among us are learning to swim, but we only swim where the bottom is almost within reach. Who among us has yet come to lose sight of shore and to swim in the Atlantic of divine love where fathomless truths of God rolls underneath and the infinite is all around? Oh, may God daily teach us more and more of what we already know in part—and may the truth which we have as yet but dimly perceived, come to us in a brighter and clearer manner till we see all things in clear sunlight! This can only be as our own character becomes more clear and pure, for we see according to what we are and as is the eye, such is that which it sees. Only the pure in heart can see a pure and holy God! We shall be like Jesus when we shall see Him as He is—and certainly we shall never see Him as He is till we are like He is!

In heavenly things we see as much as we have within ourselves. He who has eaten Christ's flesh and blood *spiritually* is the man who can see this in the sacred supper. And he who has been baptized into Christ sees Christ in baptism. To him that has shall be given and he shall have abundantly! Baptism sets forth the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, and our participation therein. Its teaching is two-fold. First, think of our representative union with Christ, so that when He died and was buried it was on our behalf and we were thus buried with Him. This will give you the teaching of baptism so far as it sets forth a creed. We declare in baptism that we believe in the death of Jesus and desire to partake in all the merit of it. But there is a second equally important matter and that is our realized union with Christ which is set forth in baptism, not so much as a doctrine of our creed as a matter of our *experience*. There

is a manner of dying, or being buried, of rising and of living in Christ which must be displayed in each one of us if we are, indeed, members of the body of Christ.

I. First, then, I need you to think of OUR REPRESENTATIVE UNION WITH CHRIST as it is set forth in baptism as a truth of God to be believed. Our Lord Jesus is the substitute for His people and when He died, it was on their behalf and in their place. The great doctrine of our justification lies in this—that Christ took our sins, stood in our place and, as our surety, suffered, bled and died—thus presenting on our behalf a sacrifice for sin. We are to regard Him, not as a private person, but as our representative. We are buried with Him in baptism unto death to show that we accept Him as being dead and buried for us. Baptism as a burial with Christ signifies, first, acceptance of the death and burial of Christ as being for us. Let us do that, at this very moment, with all our hearts. What other hope have we? When our divine Lord came down from the heights of glory and took upon Himself our manhood, He became one with you and with me! And being found in fashion as a man, it pleased the Father to lay sin upon Him, even *your* sins and *mine*! Do you not accept that truth of God and agree that the Lord Jesus should be the bearer of your guilt and stand for you in the sight of God? “Amen! Amen,” say all of you! He went up to the cross loaded with all this guilt and there He suffered in our place as we ought to have suffered!

It pleased the Father, instead of bruising *us*, to bruise Him. He put Him to grief, making His soul an offering for sin! Do we not gladly accept Jesus as our substitute? O beloved, whether you have been baptized in water or not, I put this question to you, “Do you accept the Lord Jesus as your surety and substitute?” For if you do *not*, you shall bear your own guilt and carry your own sorrow—and stand in your own place beneath the glance of the angry justice of God! Many of us at this moment are saying in our inmost hearts—

*“My soul looks back to see
The burdens You did bear,
When hanging on the cursed tree,
And hopes her guilt was there.”*

Now, by being buried with Christ in baptism, we set our seal to the fact that the death of Christ was on our behalf and that we were in Him, died in Him, and in token of our belief, we consent to the watery grave and yield ourselves to be buried according to His command. This is a matter of fundamental faith—Christ dead and buried for us—in other words, substitution, suretyship, vicarious sacrifice. His death is the hinge of our confidence—we are not baptized into His *example*, or His life, but into His *death*. We hereby confess that all our salvation lies in the death of Jesus, which death we accept as having been incurred on our account. But this is not all. If I am to be buried, it should not be so much because I accept the substitutionary death of another for me as because I am dead, myself!

Baptism is an acknowledgment of our own death in Christ. Why should a living man be buried? Why should he even be buried because another died on his behalf? My burial with Christ means not only that He died for me, but that I died *in* Him; so that my *death* with Him needs a *burial* with Him. Jesus died for us because He is one with us. The Lord Jesus Christ did not take His people’s sins by an arbitrary choice of God! But it was most natural, and fit, and proper that He should take His people’s sins, since they are His people, and He is their federal head. It behooved Christ to suffer for this reason—that He was the covenant representative of His people. He is the head of the body, the church, and if the members sinned, it was meet that the head, though the head had not sinned, should bear the consequence of the acts of the body. As there is a natural relationship between Adam and those that are in Adam, so is there between the second Adam and those that are in Him. I accept what the first Adam did as my sin. Some of you may quarrel with it and with the whole covenant dispensation, if you please, but as God has pleased to set it up, and I feel the effect of it, I see no use in *my* opposing it! As I accept the sin of father Adam and feel that I accept the death and sinned in him, even so, with intense delight I accept the atoning sacrifice of my second Adam, and rejoice that in Him I have died and risen again! I lived, I died, I kept the law, I satisfied justice in my covenant head! Let me be buried in baptism that I may show to all around that I believe I was one with my Lord in His death and burial for sin! Look at this, O child of God, and do not be afraid of it!

These are grand truths of God, and they are sure and comforting. You are getting among Atlantic billows, now, but be not afraid! Realize the sanctifying effect of this truth. Suppose that a man had been

condemned to die on account of a great crime. Suppose, further, that he has actually died for that crime, and now, by some wonderful work of God, after having died, he has been made to live again! He comes among men, again, as alive from the dead! And what ought to be the state of his mind with regard to his offense? Will he commit that crime again? A crime for which he was *executed*? I say emphatically, God forbid! Rather would he say, “I have tasted the bitterness of this sin, and I am miraculously lifted up out of the death which it brought upon me and made to live again. Now I will hate the thing that slew me and abhor it with all my soul.” He who has received the wages of sin would learn to avoid it for the future. But you reply, “We never died, so we were never made to suffer the due reward of our sins.” Granted, but that which Christ did for you comes to the same thing—and the Lord looks upon it as the same thing! You are so one with Jesus that you must regard His death as your death, His sufferings as the chastisement of your peace! You have died in the death of Jesus, and now, by strange, mysterious grace, you are brought up again, from the pit of corruption unto newness of life! Can you, *will* you, go into sin again? You have seen what God thinks of sin—you perceive that He utterly loathes it—for when it was laid on His dear Son, He did not spare Him, but put Him to grief and smote Him to death! Can you, after *that*, turn back to the accursed thing which God hates? Surely the effect of the great grief of the Savior upon your spirit must be sanctifying! How shall we who are dead to sin live any longer therein? How shall we who have passed under its curse, and endured its awful penalty, tolerate its power? Shall we go back to this murderous, villainous, virulent, abominable evil? It cannot be! Grace forbids!

This doctrine is not the conclusion of the whole matter. The text describes us as buried with a view to *rising*. “Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism unto death”—for what objective?—“that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” Be buried in Christ! What for; that you *may be dead forever*? No; but that now, getting where Christ is, *you may go where Christ goes*! Behold Him, then—He goes, first, into the sepulcher. But next, *out* of the sepulcher—for when the third morning came He rose! If you are one with Christ at all, you must be one with Him all through—you must be one with Him in His death, and one with Him in His burial—then you shall come to be one with Him in His resurrection!

Am I a dead man now? No, blessed be His name, it is written, “Because I live you shall live also.” True, I am dead in one sense, “For you are dead”—but yet not dead in another, “For your life is hid with Christ in God.” And is he, now, absolutely dead who has a hidden life? No, since I am one with Christ, I am what Christ is! As He is a *living* Christ, I am a living spirit! What a glorious thing it is to have risen from the dead because Christ has given us life! Our old legal life has been taken from us by the sentence of the law, and the law views us as dead—but now we have received a new life, a life out of death, resurrection—life in Christ Jesus! The life of the Christian is the life of Christ! Ours is not the life of the first creation, but of the new creation from among the dead. Now we live in newness of life, quickened unto holiness, righteousness, and joy by the Spirit of God. The life of the flesh is a hindrance to us. Our energy is in His Spirit. In the highest and best sense, our life is spiritual and heavenly.

This is also a doctrine which is to be held most firmly. I want you to see the force of this, for I am aiming at practical results this morning. If God has given to you and to me an entirely new life in Christ, how can that new life spend itself after the fashion of the old life? Shall the spiritual live as the carnal? How can you that were the servants of sin, but have been made free by precious blood, go back to your old slavery? When you were in the old Adam life, you lived in sin and loved it. But now you have been dead and buried, and have come forth into newness of life—can it be that you can go back to the beggarly elements from which the Lord has brought you? If you live in sin, you will be false to your profession, for you profess to be alive unto God! If you walk in lust, you will tread under foot the blessed doctrines of the Word of God, for these lead to holiness and purity! You would make Christianity to be a byword and a proverb, if, after all, you who were quickened from your spiritual death, should exhibit a conduct no better than the life of ordinary men, and little superior to what your former life used to be! As many of you as have been baptized have said to the world—“We are dead to the world, and we have come forth into a new life. Our fleshly desires are, from now on, to be viewed as dead, for we now live after a fresh order of things. The Holy Spirit has worked in us a new nature, and though we are *in* the world, we are not *of* it, but are new-made men and women, created anew in Christ Jesus.” This is the doctrine which we avow to all mankind, that Christ died and rose again, and that His people died and rose again *in Him*. Out of this doctrine grows death unto sin, and life unto God—and we wish, by every

action and every movement of our lives, to teach it to all that see us. So far the doctrine—is it not a precious one, indeed?

Oh, if you are, indeed, one with Christ, shall the world find you polluting yourselves? Shall the members of a generous, gracious head be covetous and grasping? Shall the members of a glorious, pure and perfect head be defiled with the lusts of the flesh and the follies of a vain life? If believers are, indeed, so identified with Christ that they are His fullness, should they not be holiness, itself? If we live by virtue of our union with His body, how can we live as other Gentiles do? How is it that so many professors exhibit a mere worldly life, living for business and for pleasure, but not *for* God, *in* God, or *with* God? They sprinkle a little religion on a worldly life and so hope to Christianize it. But it will not do! I am bound to live as Christ would have lived under my circumstances. In my private chamber or in my public pulpit I am bound to be what Christ would have been in the same case. I am bound to prove to men that union to Christ is no fiction, or fanatical sentiment, but that we are swayed by the same principles and actuated by the same motives! Baptism is thus an embodied creed, and you may read it in these words—“Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also you are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who has raised Him from the dead.”

II. But, secondly, A REALIZED UNION WITH CHRIST is also set forth in baptism and this is rather a matter of experience than of doctrine.

1. First, there is, as a matter of actual experience in the true believer, death. “Know you not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?” It must be contrary to all law to bury those who are yet alive. Until they are dead, men can have no right to be buried. Very well, then, the Christian is dead—dead, first, to the dominion of sin. Whenever sin called him before, he answered, “Here I am, for you did call me.” Sin ruled his members, and if sin said, “Do this,” he did it, like the soldiers obedient to their centurion, for sin ruled over all the parts of his nature and exercised a supreme tyranny over him. Grace has changed all this. When we are converted, we become dead to the dominion of sin! If sin calls us, now, we refuse to come, for we are dead. If sin commands us, we will not obey, for we are dead to its authority. Sin comes to us now—oh, that it did not—and it finds in us the old corruption which is crucified, but not yet dead. But it has no dominion over our true life. Blessed be God, sin cannot reign over us, though it may assail us and work us harm! “Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law, but under grace.” We sin, but not with allowance. With what grief we look back upon our transgressions! How earnestly do we endeavor to avoid them!

Sin tries to maintain its usurped power over us, but we do not acknowledge it as our sovereign. Evil enters us, now, as an interloper and a stranger—and works sad havoc—but it does not abide in us upon the throne. It is an alien and despised. It is no more honored and delighted in. We are dead to the reigning power of sin. The believer, if spiritually buried with Christ, is dead to the desire of any such power. “What?” you ask, “do not godly men have sinful desires?” Alas, they do. The old nature that is in them lusts towards sin, but the true man, the real ego, desires to be purged of every speck or trace of evil! The law in the members would gladly urge us to sin, but the life in the heart compels us to holiness. I can honestly say for myself, that the deepest desire of my soul is to live a perfect life. If I could have my own best desire, I would never sin again. And though, alas, I do consent to sin so that I become responsible when I transgress, yet my innermost self loathes iniquity. Sin is my bondage, not my pleasure. It is my misery, not my delight—at the *thought* of it, I cry out, “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me?” In our heart of hearts our spirit cleaves steadfastly to that which is good, true and heavenly, so that the real man delights in the law of God, and follows hard after goodness. The main current and true bent of our soul’s wish and will is not towards sin. The apostle taught us no mere fancy when he said, “For he that is dead is freed from sin.”

Moreover, in the next place we are dead as to the pursuits and aims of the sinning and ungodly life. Brothers and sisters, are any of you that profess to be God’s servants living for yourselves? Then you are not God’s servants, for he that is really born-again lives unto God—the objective of his life is the glory of God and the good of his fellow men. This is the prize that is set before the quickened man and towards this he runs. “I do not run that way,” says one. Very well, then you will not come to the desired end. If you are running after the pleasures of the world or the riches of it, you may win the prize you run for, but you cannot win “the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus.” I hope that many of us can honestly say that we are now dead to every objective in life but the glory of God in Christ Jesus. We are in

the world and have to live as other men do, carrying on our ordinary business—but all this is subordinate and held in as with bit and bridle—our aims are above yon changeable moon. The flight of our soul, like that of an eagle, is above these clouds! Though that bird of the sun alights upon the rock, or even descends to the plain, yet its joy is to dwell above, outsoaring the lightning, rising over the black head of the tempest, and looking down upon all earthly things! Henceforth our grace-given life speeds onward and upward—we are not of the world, and the world's engagements are not those upon which we spend our noblest powers!

Again, we are dead in this sense, that we are dead to the *guidance* of sin. The lust of the flesh drives a man this way and that way. He steers his course by the question, "What is most pleasant? What will give me most present gratification?" The way of the ungodly is mapped out by the hand of selfish desire, but you that are true Christians have another guide—you are led by the Spirit in a right way. You ask, "What is good and what is acceptable in the sight of the Most High?" Your daily prayer is, "Lord, show me what You would have me do." You are alive to the teachings of the Spirit, who will lead you into all the truths of God—and you are dead, yes, dead to the dogmas of carnal wisdom, the oppositions of philosophy, the errors of proud human wisdom! Blind guides who fall with their victims into the ditch are shunned by you, for you have chosen the way of the Lord. What a blessed state of heart this is! I trust, my brethren, that we have fully realized it! We know the Shepherd's voice, and we will not follow a stranger. Only one is our teacher, and we submit our understandings to His infallible instruction!

Our text must have had a very forcible meaning among the Romans in Paul's time, for they were sunk in all manner of odious vices. Take an average Roman of that period, and you would have found in him a man accustomed to spend a large part of his time in the amphitheatre, hardened by the brutal sight of bloody shows in which gladiators slew each other to amuse a holiday crowd. Taught in such a school, the Roman was cruel to the last degree—and, therefore, ferocious in the indulgence of his passions. A depraved man was not regarded as being at all degraded! Not only nobles and emperors were monsters of vice, but the public teachers were impure. When those who were regarded as moral, were corrupt, you may imagine what the immoral were! "Enjoy yourself; follow after the pleasures of the flesh," was the rule of the age! Christianity was the introduction of a new element. See here a Roman converted by the grace of God! What a change is in him! His neighbors say, "You were not at the amphitheatre this morning. How could you miss the sight of the hundred Germans who tore out each other's bowels?" "No," he says, "I was not there. I could not bear to be there. I am totally dead to it. If you were to force me to be there, I must shut my eyes, for I could not look on murder committed in sport!"

The Christian did not resort to places of licentiousness. He was as good as dead to such filthiness. The fashions and customs of the age were such that Christians could not consent to them and so they became dead to society. It was not merely that Christians did not go into open sin, but they spoke of it with horror, and their lives rebuked it. Things which the multitude counted a joy, and talked of exultingly, gave no comfort to the follower of Jesus, for he was dead to such evils. This is our solemn avowal when we come forward to be baptized. We say, by acts which are louder than words that we are dead to those things in which sinners take delight, and we wish to be so accounted.

2. The next thought in baptism is *burial*. Death comes first and burial follows. Now, what is burial, brothers and sisters? Burial is, first of all, the seal of death. It is the certificate of decease. "Is such a man dead?" you ask. Another answers, "Why, dear sir, he was buried a year ago." You ask no more whether he is dead when you know that he is *buried*. There have been instances of persons being buried alive and I am afraid that the thing happens with sad frequency in baptism, but it is unnatural and by no means the rule. I fear that many have been buried alive in baptism, and have therefore risen and walked out of the grave just as they were. If burial is true, it is a certificate of *death*. If I am able to say in very truth, "I was buried with Christ 30 years ago," I must surely be dead. Certainly the world thought so, for not long after my burial with Jesus, I began to preach His name, and by that time the world thought me very far gone, and said, "He stinks!" They began to say all manner of evil against the preacher, but the more I stank in their nostrils, the better I liked it, for the surer I was that I was really dead to the world! It is good for a Christian to be offensive to wicked men. See how our Master stank in the esteem of the godless when they cried, "Away with Him; away with Him!" Though no corruption could come near His blessed body, yet His perfect character was not savored by that perverse generation! There must, then, be in us *death to the world*, and some of the effects of death, or our baptism is null and void. As burial is

the certificate of death, so is burial with Christ the seal of our mortification to the world. But burial is, next, the displaying of death. While the man is indoors, the passers-by do not know that he is dead, but when the funeral takes place, and he is carried through the streets, everybody knows that he is dead. This is what baptism ought to be. The believer's death to sin is, at first, a secret, but by an open confession he bids all men know that he is dead with Christ. Baptism is the funeral rite by which death to sin is openly set forth before all men!

Next, burial is the separateness of death. The dead man no longer remains in the house, but is placed *apart* as one who ceases to be numbered with the living. A corpse is not welcome company. Even the most beloved object, after a while, cannot be tolerated when death has done his work upon it. Even Abraham, who had been so long united with his beloved Sarah, is heard to say, "Bury my dead out of my sight." Such is the believer when his death to the world is fully known—he is poor company for worldlings, and they shun him as a damper upon their revelry. The true saint is put into the separated class with Christ according to His Word, "If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you." The saint is put away in the same grave as his Lord, for as He was, so are we, also, in this world. He is shut up by the world in the one cemetery of the faithful, if I may call it so, where all that are in Christ are together, dead to the world, with this epitaph for them all, "And you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." And the grave is the place—I do not know where to get a word—of the *settledness* of death, for when a man is dead and buried you never expect to see him come home again. So far as this world is concerned, death and burial are irrevocable. They tell me that spirits walk the earth and we have all read in the newspaper, "The truth about ghosts," but I have my doubts on the subject. In spiritual things, however, I am afraid that some are not so buried with Christ, but what they walk a great deal among the tombs! I am grieved at heart that it should be so. The man in Christ cannot walk as a ghost, because he is alive somewhere else—he has received a new being, and therefore, he cannot mutter and peep among the dead hypocrites around him!

See what our chapter says about our Lord—"Christ being raised from the dead dies no more: death has no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He lives, He lives unto God." If we have been once raised from dead works, we shall never go back to them! I may sin, but sin can never have dominion over me! I may be a transgressor and wander much from my God, but never can I go back to the old death! When my Lord's grace got hold of me and buried me, He worked in my soul the conviction that from now on and forever I was to the world a dead man! I am right glad that I made no compromise but came right out. I have drawn the sword and thrown away the scabbard! Tell the world they need not try to fetch us back, for we are spoiled for them as much as if we were dead! All they could have would be our carcasses. Tell the world not to tempt us any longer, for our hearts are changed. Sin may charm the old man who hangs there upon the cross, and he may turn his leering eye that way, but he cannot follow up his glance, for he cannot get down from the cross—the Lord has taken care to use the mallet well, and He has fastened his hands and feet right firmly—so that the crucified flesh must remain in the place of doom and death! Yet the true, the genuine life within us cannot die, for it is born of God—and neither can it abide in the tombs, for its call is to purity, and joy, and liberty—and to that call it yields itself.

3. We have come as far as death and burial. But baptism, according to the text, represents, also, resurrection—"That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Now, notice that the person who is dead in Christ, and buried in Christ, is also *raised* in Christ—and this is a special work upon him. All the dead are not raised, but our Lord, Himself, is "the first fruits of them that slept." He is the first-begotten from among the dead! Resurrection was a special work upon the body of Christ by which He was raised up. And that work, begun upon the head, will continue till all the members partake of it, for—

*"Though our inbred sins require
Our flesh to see the dust;
Yet as the Lord our Savior rose,
So all His followers must."*

As to our soul and spirit, the resurrection has begun upon us. It has not come to our bodies yet, but it will be given to them at the appointed day. For the present, a special work has been worked upon us by which we have been raised up from among the dead. Brothers and sisters, if you had been dead and bur-

ied and had been lying one night, say, in Woking Cemetery, and if a divine voice had called you right up from the grave when the silent stars were shining on the open heath—if, I say, you had risen right out from the green mound of turf—what a lonely being you would have been in the vast cemetery amid the still night! How you would sit down on the grave and wait for morning!

That is very much your condition with regard to the present evil world. You were once like the rest of the sinners around you—dead in sin and sleeping in the grave of evil custom. The Lord, by His power, has called you out of your grave, and now you are alive in the midst of death! There can be no fellowship here for you, for what communion has the living with the dead? The man just quickened out there in the cemetery would find none among all the dead around him with whom he could talk—and you can find no companions in this world. There lies a skull, but it sees not from the eye sockets—neither is there speech in its grim mouth. I see a mass of bones lying in yon corner—the living one looks at them but they cannot hear or speak! Imagine yourself there. All that you would say to the bones would be to ask, “Can these dry bones live?” You would be a foreigner in that home of corruption and you would hasten to get away. That is your condition in the world—God has raised you up from among the dead, from out of the company among whom you had your former conversation. Now, I pray you, do not go and scratch into the earth to tear up the graves to find a friend there. Who would tear open a coffin and cry, “Come, you must drink with me! You must go to the theater with me”? No, we dread the idea of association with the dead, and I tremble when I see a professor trying to have communion with worldly men. “Come you out from among them; be you separate; touch not the unclean thing.”

You know what would happen to you if you were thus raised and were forced to sit close to a dead body newly taken from the grave. You would cry, “I cannot bear it! I cannot endure it!” You would get to the wind side of the horrid corpse. So with a man that is really alive unto God! Deeds of injustice, oppression, or unchastity he cannot endure, for life loathes corruption. Notice that as we are raised up by a special work from among the dead, that rising is by divine power. Christ is brought, again, “from the dead by the glory of the Father.” What does that mean? Why did it not say, “By the power of the Father”? Ah, beloved, *glory* is a grander word, for all the attributes of God are displayed in all their solemn pomp in the raising of Christ from the dead! There was the Lord’s *faithfulness*, for had He not declared that His soul should not rest in hell, neither should His Holy One see corruption? Was not the *love* of the Father seen there? I am sure it was a delight to the heart of God to bring back life to the body of His dear Son! And so, when you and I are raised out of our death in sin, it is not merely God’s power, it is not merely God’s wisdom that is seen, it is “the *glory* of the Father.” Oh, to think that every child of God that has been quickened has been quickened by “the glory of the Father!” It has taken not only the Holy Spirit, and the work of Jesus, and the work of the Father, but the very “glory of the Father.” If the tiniest spark of spiritual life has to be created by “the glory of the Father,” what will be the glory of that life when it comes into its full perfection, and we shall be like Christ, and see Him as He is! O beloved, value highly the new life which God has given you! Think of it as making you richer than if you had a sea of pearls! Greater than if you were descended from the loftiest of princes! There is in you that which required all the attributes of God to create! He could make a world by power, alone, but *you* must be raised from the dead by “the glory of the Father.”

Notice, next, that this life is entirely new. We are to “walk in newness of life.” The life of a Christian is an entirely different thing from the life of other men, entirely different from his own life before his conversion. And when people try to counterfeit it, they cannot accomplish the task. A person writes you a letter and wants to make you think he is a believer, but within about half-a-dozen sentences there occurs a line which betrays the lie. The hypocrite has very nearly copied our expressions, but not quite! There is a Freemason among us, and the outside world watches us a bit, and by-and-by they pick up certain of our signs. But there is a private sign which they can never imitate, and therefore at a certain point, they break down. A godless man may pray as much as a Christian, read as much of the Bible as a Christian, and even go beyond us in externals—but there is a secret which he knows not and cannot counterfeit! The life divine is so totally new that the unconverted have no copy to work by! In every Christian it is as new as if he were the very first Christian. Even though in every one it is the image and superscription of Christ, yet there is a milled edge or a something about the real silver that these counterfeits cannot get a hold of! It is a new, a novel, a fresh, a divine thing!

And lastly, this life is an active thing. I have often wished that Paul had not been so fast when I have been reading him. His style travels in seven-leagued boots! He does not write like an ordinary man. I beg to tell him that if he had written this text according to proper order, it should run, “Like as Christ was raised up from the dead” by the glory of the Father, “even so, we, also, should be raised from the dead.” But see, Paul has got over ever so much ground while we are talking—he has reached to “*walking*.” The walking includes the living, of which it is the sign, and Paul thinks so fast when the Spirit of God is upon him that he has passed beyond the cause to the effect! No sooner do we get the new life than we become *active*—we do not sit down and say, “I have received a new life: how grateful I ought to be. I will quietly enjoy myself.” Oh dear, no! We have something to do as soon as we are alive and we begin walking—and so the Lord keeps us all our lives in His work! He does not allow us to sit down contented with the mere fact that we live, nor does He allow us to spend all our time in examining whether we are alive or not. But He gives us one battle to fight, and then another! He gives us His house to build, His farm to till, His children to nurse and His sheep to feed! At times we have fierce struggles with our own spirit and fears lest sin and Satan should prevail, till our life is scarcely discerned by itself. But it is always discerned by its *acts*. The life that is given to those who were dead with Christ is an energetic, forceful life that is all busy for Christ, and would, if it could, move heaven and earth and subdue all things unto Him who is its head! This life, Paul tells us, is an unending one. Once get it and it will never go from you. “Christ being raised from the dead dies no more.”

Next, it is a life which is not under the law or under sin. Christ came under the law when He was here, and He had our sin laid on Him, and therefore died. But after He rose again, there was no sin laid on Him. In His resurrection, both the sinner and the surety are free. What had Christ to do after His rising? To bear more sin? No, but just to live unto God! That is where you and I are. We have no sin to carry, now—it was all laid on Christ. What have we to do? Every time we have a headache, or feel ill, are we to cry out, “This is a punishment for my sin”? Nothing of the kind! Our punishment is all over, for we have borne the capital sentence, and are dead—our new life must be unto God—

*“All that remains for me
Is but to love and sing
And wait until the angels come
To bear me to my King.”*

I have now to serve Him and delight myself in Him, and use the power which He gives me of calling others from the dead, saying, “Awake, you that sleep! Arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you life.” I am not going back to the grave of spiritual death nor to my grave clothes of sin, but by divine grace I will still believe in Jesus and go from strength to strength, not under law—not fearing hell, nor hoping to merit heaven—but as a new creature, loving because loved, living for Christ because Christ lives in me, rejoicing in glorious hope of that which is yet to be revealed by virtue of my oneness in Christ!

Poor sinner, you do not know anything about this death and burial, and you never will till you have power to become sons of God! And that He gives to as many as believe on His name. Believe on His name and it is all yours! Amen and Amen!

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